



CITY OF KIRKLAND

Department of Public Works

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Council Meeting: 12/10/2013

Agenda: Other Business

Item #: 8. h. (4).

MEMORANDUM

To: Kurt Triplett, City Manager

From: David Godfrey, P.E., Transportation Engineering Manager
Pam Bissonnette, Interim Public Works Director

Date: November 25, 2013

Subject: Supplementary response to Traffic Petition Regarding Lake Washington Blvd.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council receives staff's supplemental response to the Traffic Petition regarding Lake Washington Boulevard and Lake St S. presented at the City Council meeting on August 6, 2013. Several public comments were received that the initial staff response focused too much on concurrency and did not address the concerns related to collisions or the apparent discrepancy between Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) collision data and the City of Kirkland's collision data. This additional response provides further details on how collision data is collected and shared among various government agencies and how that information is used when evaluating development proposals. This supplementary response will also be provided to those who signed the petition.

BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:

The Public Works Department maintains a database of traffic collision records. This database is populated by records generated by the Kirkland Police Department. The City of Kirkland also sends its collision reports to the Washington State Patrol (WSP), as do other local agencies. The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is able to produce reports based on this data, but the Public Works Database makes data available much more quickly and allows sorting and classification in a number of ways that are not available through the WSDOT system.

Since the WSDOT and Public Works systems both get the bulk of their Kirkland related input from the Kirkland Police Department, the systems usually contain all the same collisions. Some differences may occur on and around state facilities such as on I-405 or near access points to I-405 or SR 520 where the Washington State Patrol may handle collisions. Information about these collisions is available from the WSDOT system. Coding errors or differences in collision location descriptions may lead to the appearance of differences between the databases.

In one example of a WSDOT report for a three year (2009-2011) period on a section of Lake Street S./Lake Washington Blvd., 30 collisions were shown. Twenty seven of the collisions were identical between the WSDOT and the City databases. One report cited by WSDOT was not in the Kirkland database. Further research showed that this collision actually occurred at a location in Seattle and was apparently misreported by WSP/WSDOT. Two reports from the WSDOT data base appear to not match the City database, but according to Kirkland records, it appears that the WSP/WSDOT has one at the wrong location and the other on the wrong date. Additionally, Kirkland has one collision in the area requested in the report that does not appear on the WSDOT report.

Use of Kirkland Collision Data

Kirkland collision data is used in the review of Kirkland development proposals. The most recent three years of data is looked at. Intersections where the proposal has a major impact and intersections near access points are examined, but not the entire length of the arterial. For example with the Potala Village project, the intersection of 10th S. and Lake Street was one of the intersections reviewed; there were two collisions during the period 2007 through 2009. More than just the number of collisions is considered; patterns, rates (collisions per unit of volume) and severity of collisions are also examined. This is the same process that has been used for development review over at least the past 15 years in Kirkland.

Kirkland staff believe the Kirkland database to be more accurate and complete, and therefore there is no advantage to using WSDOT data for analysis on the section of Lake Street S./Lake Washington Blvd cited in the report.

Finally, in the case of the Potala Village review, relying on WSDOT data rather than Kirkland's data would not have resulted in different traffic or collision-based conclusions regarding the potential development.